



SATURDAY, JUNE 30 1906

THE CLOUD VOLCANO.

Dark rose the rugged peak toward the west,
With dun clouds wrapped around its sable crest.
While here and there in deep ravines below
Went breezy drifts of curved and carven snow.
A picture full of solemn somber power
Lined on the sky at sunset's quiet hour.
When suddenly upon its summit gleamed
Eruptions of red fire, which flamed and seemed
An outburst of the pent-up fires below.
Some running lava-like o'er drifts of snow,
Some rising in a mighty lurid pyre
Unto high Heaven to kindle and aspire.
On the cloud-mountain side there opened seams
Such as Satanic lips might see in dreams.
Glimpses of furnace fires from awful depths,
Sometimes in sullen glow which slowly creeps
In mighty currents, crimson-tinted tides,
Which o'er all obstacles with red power strides.
And there were glowing caves with embers rimmed,
Deep, fathomless ravines by black smoke dimmed,
While bonfires flamed and kindled up anew
As though the fiends in hell cut windows through.
That they might note and mock with scornful mirth
The scenes such lurid lights revealed on earth.
Only the clouds, but they seemed shaped and wrought
By some great artist steeped in somber thought.
Who wished to show how small earth's hills
Beside these peaks beribboned with red rills.
Of no intense in mighty plan and play,
In scenic splendor stretching far away
Through unpeopled spaces, etched on twilight gray.

I. EDGAR JONES.

HIS DEAR RELATION

"I was really a most comical situation, my dear," said Lady Sara to her friend, Lady Glenlyndon. "They were announced together, just like husband and wife. She came in looking ready to burst with rage and affecting not to notice the general grin. He came in, either not having heard the announcement and quite unconscious of the presence of his dear relation, or else one of the finest actors I have ever seen. I think she would have liked to order him to be turned out of the room on the spot, but as she could not do that she turned up her nose and I am sure it turned up quite enough of itself. Well, she sat down by me, and he sat near and talked affably, obviously trying to draw her in. She sat looking daggers at him, refusing to be drawn, and then at last snubbing him so that he gave her just one glance and left her to herself. She went soon, and, I hope, felt ashamed of herself, but I doubt it."
"Nothing is less conducive to repentance," said Lady Glenlyndon, laughing, "than the knowledge that one has thoroughly in the wrong."
"Exactly. Well, then, I said to him: 'How did you like that lady who has



WITNEY WAS NOT AT ALL ABASHED. Just left? He smiled good humoredly—what a pleasant smile he has!—and said: 'One thing is quite certain, that I could not like her less than she did me.' 'Don't you know who she was?' I said; and when he said 'No,' I added: 'She is your connection, Lady Witney.'

"His face was a perfect study. 'Good Lord!' he said, 'the dowager! Do you suppose she knew me?'"
"Well, she could have hardly helped doing so, as that stupid Watkins announced you together as Lord and Lady Witney."

"You should have seen how he stared, and then he laughed. 'Watkins takes the cake,' he said. 'But I wish I hadn't been the hero of it—and least of all with the dowager. It's odd, by the bye, how different she is to what I pictured her!'"

"What was that? I naturally asked. 'Oh, old and frumpy, the regulation dowager, with a high nose and plastered-down bands.'"

In this unlucky fashion began the personal acquaintance, if it may be so called, between the new Lord Witney and the widow of his predecessor. The piquancy of the situation from the opposing leaders of a family feud. The old Lord Witney had always resented the fact that he had no son, and Lady Witney was even more indignant that her daughter could not inherit to the exclusion of the distant cousin. The fact that the principal seat and estate were entailed lent fuel to the fire.

Lord Witney had pictured his "dear

relation" as a typical dowager with the external appearance of a frump and the manners of a true virago. Lady Witney, as it happened, was one of those fortunate women who preserve their fineness of figure, delicacy of skin

and piquancy of feature. Also she did not disdain to lend some skilful assistance to the work of nature. She had been married young, but she looked much younger than she was, and but for the well-known fact that her daughter's "coming out" was one of the events of the year, she might have posed successfully as the typical femme a trente ans.

"Witney ought to marry his cousin and reunite the title and the property," was what the world said. Kind and busy-boddy people even bustled about and tried to help this on. An entirely unpremeditated effect, however, was produced by some well-meaning but ignorant rich people. They put Lady Witney on his other side at dinner. She gave him her shoulder ostentatiously through the soup and fish. Then he spoke to her. She did not reply or turn, but she did not continue her conversation with her partner. Witney spoke again—a leading remark of a general kind. She turned on him with flashing eyes and replied in a manner that from one stranger guest to another was decidedly fierce. Not to say rude. Witney was not at all abashed. He seemed rather amused and continued the conversation.

"Don't you think," she said, abruptly, "that a fortune-hunter is a despicable thing?"
"Certainly," he replied, readily.
"And don't you think that a fortune-hunter who pursues a girl simply for her money when he knows that he will never be allowed to marry her, and that the mere idea is hateful and not to be borne, and that he would never dare, if the girl had a father or a brother to protect her—"

"Most cowardly and objectionable person," I am glad that the lady whom I am in love with is not an heiress or—"

"Oh, you are in love, are you?" she then said. "Who is she?"

"Well, now, really, you see, as a stranger—"

"You know perfectly well who I am."

"Certainly, but as you appear to—"

Lady Witney's really fine eyes literally flashed fire—but at the moment the ladies fortunately rose.

She reached home without having delivered herself, and, feeling that she must do so or burst, she wrote a scorching letter, telling him that his conduct was most ungentlemanly, and that she forbade him ever to speak to her or come near her again.

He replied courteously acknowledging the letter, and begging her "out of her great experience" to tell him whether under similar circumstances he should publicly refuse to sit by her, or what?

She wrote a cutting note in reply, mentioning incidentally that though it was quite true that she was quite an old woman (underlined twice) it was not usual in decent society to tell a lady so.

Lord Witney wrote to disclaim that he had done this or had any intention of doing so. On the contrary, he knew that she had married as the merest girl, and he ventured to add that if he had not known this, her appearance would have inspired him with a belief that she was even younger.

She found it absolutely necessary to answer this to the effect that she attached no value to his opinion of her appearance, and he replied to her. How long this singular correspondence would have gone on is difficult to say, but happening to meet Lord Witney at a party, Lady Witney went up to him.

"I know what you are aiming at," she said. "You want to get hold of my heiress daughter, and you think that if you persecute me, you will drive me to consent to get rid of the annoyance."

"I utterly deny the persecution. I merely replied to your letters. That was common politeness. You might have ignored the replies."

"I could not. There was something so insinuating—and I could not bear that you should think—" She stopped in some confusion.

"Besides, I deny your accusation. I would not marry your daughter if she asked me. I love another woman."

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